CLEAN COPY OF CLAIMS

B1

5. An apparatus for guiding sutures through a membrane wall near the edge region of an opening comprising:

a suture-feed part, a suture-clamping part, and a suture-accommodating part, said suture-feed part, suture-clamping part, and suture-accommodating part being arranged one behind the other along a common longitudinal axis at a distal arrangement end, said suture-feed part, suture-clamping part, and suture-accommodating part being rotatable relative to one another about said common longitudinal axis;

said suture-accommodating part, provided at said distal arrangement end and being connected by an inner sleeve to a first rotary adjustment part provided at a proximal arrangement end;

said suture-clamping part being connected to an outer sleeve, said outer sleeve is enclosing said inner sleeve, and wherein said outer sleeve being connected to a second rotary adjustment part, said second rotary adjustment part being at a predetermined distance from said first rotary adjustment part and from said distal arrangement end;

said suture-feed part being in adjacent relation to said suture-clamping part, said suture-feed part being connected to a third rotary adjustment part, said third rotary adjustment part being adjacently connected to said second rotary adjustment part; and

46

46

two spring devices, one of said spring devices located between said first rotary adjustment part and said second rotary adjustment part, the other of said spring devices located between said second rotary adjustment part and said third rotary adjustment part, whereby said spring devices force said rotary adjustment parts away from one another.

3 6. An apparatus for guiding sutures through a membrane wall near the edge region of an opening comprising:

B1 a suture-feed part, a suture-clamping part, and a suture-accommodating part, said suture-feed part, suture-clamping part, and suture-accommodating part being arranged behind the other along a common longitudinal axis at a distal arrangement end, said suture-feed part, suture-clamping part, and suture-accommodating part being rotatable relative to one another about said common longitudinal axis;

said suture-accommodating part, provided at said distal arrangement end being connect by an inner sleeve to a first rotary adjustment part provided at a proximal arrangement end;

said suture-clamping part being connected to an outer sleeve, said outer sleeve is enclosing said inner sleeve, and wherein said outer sleeve being connected to a second rotary adjustment part, said rotary adjustment part being at a predetermined distance from said first rotary adjustment part and from said distal arrangement end;

47

said suture-feed part being in adjacent relation to said suture-clamping part, said suture-feed part being connected to a third rotary adjustment part, said third rotary adjustment part being adjacently connected to said second rotary adjustment part, said second and said third rotary adjustment parts being coupled to one another in the direction of said common longitudinal axis;

said outer sleeve, having a proximal end and an edge between said first and second rotary adjustment parts, said outer sleeve, being connected to said second rotary adjustment part, is displaced relative to said second rotary adjustment part in the direction of said common longitudinal axis and at said proximal end; and

two spring devices, located between said edge and respectively adjacent sides of said first and second rotary adjustment parts, whereby said spring devices force said rotary adjustment parts away from one another.